THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE PHILIPPINES

CHAPTER I

THE PHILIPPINES

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILIPPINES

A FAVORITE pastime on a transpacific liner from the United States or Canada to Japan, China, and the Philippines is for the old-timer to get the new-comers in a corner of the smoking-room and regale them with tales of the Philippines. The fancy-dress ball is over, the excitement of the sports events has paled, the credulous old lady has feverishly written her last letter to be posted when the ship stops at the iSoth meridian, the gossipy tongues of the passengers have grown tired, all are content to rest—then is the time for the hoary-haired raconteur to take the spotlight. His hearers are forced to listen to a nar-ration of soldier exploits, perhaps of a Moro *juramentado* running *amuck* and leaving a gory path of death until, when shot down, he passes into his Mohammedan paradise to live in glory attended by bevies of wives. They are told of a steady diet of rice and fish, of cholera epidemics, of malaria-carrying mosquitoes, of exotic alcoholic beverages, of betel-nut-chewing maidens, of the Igorot dog-eaters, of destructive typhoons, and of fearful earthquakes.

Now the story-teller may be without malice,

and his own
hale and prosperous appearance may belie his
tales, but the